Mount Spokane 2000

PROJECT PROPOSAL FOR SKI AREA EXPANSION

October 2013

Prepared for: Washington State Parks



Submitted by: Mount Spokane 2000



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PROPOSAL FOR EXPANSION OF SKI AREA FACILITIES INTO THE PASEA AT MOUNT SPOKANE STATE PARK

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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park is located within Mount Spokane State Park, approximately 25 miles northeast of Spokane in Spokane County, Washington (see Figure 1). With approximately 14,000 acres, the park provides a wide range of year-round recreation opportunities to a large and diverse community of supporters and user groups. Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park is managed and operated by a community-based non-profit organization known as Mount Spokane 2000 (MS 2000) under the terms of a long-term concession agreement with the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission. Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park maintains 32 ski runs, 5 chairlifts, 2 lodges (including restaurant, lounge, ski school, equipment rentals), a ski patrol building, and various administrative support structures on 1,425 acres.

Alpine skiing on Mount Spokane began in the early 1930s when several ski clubs from the Spokane area began acquiring land and building ski area improvements at various sites around the summit of the mountain. These organizations eventually merged their interests and donated their facilities to Mount Spokane State Park, forming a non-profit entity entitled the Mount Spokane Association, which operated the ski facility until the mid 1950s. This entity constructed the world's first double chairlift in 1946, and continued to make improvements to the resort until the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission awarded a concession agreement to a private operator, the Mount Spokane Skiing Corporation (MSSC) in the mid-1950's. With the growing popularity of the sport throughout the babyboom years, skier visitation at Mount Spokane continued to increase well into the 1980's. MSSC

continued to operate the concession under various owners until the concession agreement between MSSC and State Parks expired on June 9, 1995.

In the early 1990s, after perceiving a decline in ski area visits at Mt. Spokane, as well as a dramatic exodus from the resort by many Spokane-area families who perceived that competing resorts offered a better experience, a local organization called the "Mount Spokane 2000 Study Group", now known as MS 2000, was established to explore ways in which the ski area operation could be improved to better serve the winter recreational needs of the Spokane market – in short, the group wanted to restore the mountain to its former role as the leading destination for Spokane families for affordable winter recreation.

Concurrently, challenged by a mandate to manage Mount Spokane State Park for the greatest benefit of all public users, Washington State Parks (WSP) commissioned a study to analyze the existing ski area operation and provide recommendations and guidelines for the future. This study – Mount Spokane State Park Alpine Ski Area Study – was completed in 1992 (Sno.engineering, 1992). After a lengthy competitive bidding process between MSSC and MS 2000, WSP eventually awarded the concession to MS 2000, and in October, 1997 MS 2000 assumed operation of the concession.

Development of the northwest facing slopes of Mount Spokane has been discussed for many years, in fact one could consider such an action as redevelopment or reclamation since much of this area was where Alpine ski operations originally began in the 1930's. More recently, redevelopment on the northwest face of the mountain was noted as a Potential Alpine Ski Expansion Area (PASEA) in the 1992 study, as well as in the 1997 Concession Agreement between MS 2000 and WSP. Over the past decade, MS 2000 has contracted a number of studies related to the capacity of existing facilities, infrastructure (e.g., power, water, sewer), a financial analysis of a range of development alternatives, a Regional Recreational Demand Study, an Assessment on the Effects of PASEA Development on Existing Recreation, and field inventories of wetlands, streams, and wildlife habitat in support of resort expansion into the PASEA. These studies have been utilized by MS 2000 during the formulation of the Project Proposal to minimize the potential physical effects of a ski area expansion within the Project area.

Not only is the PASEA located within the existing ski area concession boundary, but as stated previously, much of it was the original site of the first lift facilities, lodges and improved trails to be constructed on the mountain, as developed by various Spokane-area ski clubs, including the Selkirk Ski Club, the Spokane Ski Club and the Spokane Mountaineers. Prior to a 1952 fire, which destroyed a newly constructed lodge, the PASEA included overnight and day-use lodge facilities, a parking area, three rope tows and several ski trails. The concession agreement with WSP also grants MS 2000 the exclusive right to construct and operate ski area facilities within the PASEA, pending approval by WSP.

PROPOSED ACTION

Two actions are necessary to authorize an expansion of ski area facilities into the 279-acre project area: A" non-project action", which classifies the lands as either "Recreation" or "Resource Recreation", which would accommodate lift served alpine skiing facilities under the Land Classification System (LCS) and a

"project action", the authorization of the proposed chairlift and associated ski trails. Parks staff are separately and concurrently recommending a non-project proposal to the Commission to classify the PASEA. Without approval of the non-project action, the project action cannot proceed.

Therefore, Mount Spokane 2000 is submitting a request for the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission to classify the 279 acre project area as "Recreation."

Classification of the 279-acre expansion area as "Recreation" would allow the higher intensity use proposed (i.e., lift served alpine skiing) and more extensive facilities development (e.g., ski lift, alpine ski trails). This is the same classification as the existing ski area.

In concert with classification of the lands within the PASEA, Mount Spokane 2000 proposes to construct a new chairlift (Chair 6), together with seven new ski trails and accompanying infrastructure to support these proposed improvements. The number of lift towers has not been determined pending final design, but it is not expected to exceed twenty. Each tower footing would require approximately 100 square feet of ground disturbance. The lower loading terminal of the proposed lift would be located at approximately 4,420 feet in elevation (see Figure 2) and would require approximately 0.75 acres of excavation and grading. The new top terminal near the summit of Mount Spokane would be located approximately 250 feet in distance from the top terminal of Chair 1 at an elevation of approximately 5,850 feet, and would require approximately 0.5 acres of excavation and grading.

The Proposed Action would increase the acreage of lift-served ski terrain by approximately 279 acres and include the development of approximately 80 acres of formal ski trails. The trail network is designed to address existing deficiencies in the amount of beginner, low intermediate and expert terrain available within the ski area boundary. Where practical, the new trails are located to avoid potential impacts to vegetation, by utilizing existing meadows, trails and openings in the forest canopy (see Figure 2). It is important to note, that this environmental analysis will be informed by numerous years of field study as supplemented by implementation level wildlife and wetland surveys which have been conducted since the original 2012 Final SEIS release.

PURPOSE AND NEED

The underlying purpose and need for the proposal is the classification of lands within the PASEA to allow for alpine skiing and the specific development of ski area improvements within the newly classified lands:

 Classifying the project area as Recreation would provide park managers new tools to protect park resources and to provide an appropriate variety of recreational activities to park visitors, including lift served alpine skiing.

- 2) Increasing the available inventory of round trip, consistent gradient, intermediate level trails within the concession area, which will allow for better circulation and more even distribution of low-intermediate and intermediate level skiers throughout the ski area;
- Increasing the amount of terrain that has better long term snow accumulation, retention capability and snow quality available within the ski area, which provides a better assurance of continued operations during periods of low snowfall and gives the resort the ability to favorably compete in the market as well as to address the potential effects of climate change; and
- 4) Improving search and rescue operations within the PASEA.

The need for improvements, as identified by MS 2000, is elaborated below:

Purpose:

Increasing the available round trip, consistent gradient, intermediate level trails within the concession area, which will allow for better circulation and more even distribution of low-intermediate and intermediate level skiers throughout the ski area.

Need:

The PASEA expansion represents an opportunity to add a significant quantity of intermediate level terrain to Mount Spokane. This terrain would significantly change the experience of skiing at Mount Spokane, as it would add several new trails of a type of terrain that is currently a deficiency at the ski area (i.e., top-to-bottom, consistent gradient, intermediate level trails). The terrain in the expansion area presents the potential to create low to advanced intermediate level trails that have consistent grade and are consistently in the fall-line. Low intermediate and intermediate level skiers are the largest segment of the market, so this terrain will appeal to the greatest percentage of skiers. Increasing the quantity and quality of intermediate level ski runs at Mount Spokane will also create a more even distribution of skiers at Mount Spokane. Since low intermediate and intermediate level terrain is currently restricted primarily to Chair 3 at Mount Spokane, the addition of the terrain within the expansion area would reduce the high demand that the terrain off of Chair 3 currently witnesses—particularly in the merge zones found in the lower portion of the Chair 3 terrain, where densities are currently quite high. As a result, allowing for better circulation and more even distribution of low intermediate and intermediate level skiers would improve the ski experience throughout Mount Spokane.

Purpose:

Increasing the amount of terrain that has better long term snow accumulation, retention capability and snow quality available within the ski area, which provides a better assurance of continued operations during periods of low snowfall and gives the resort the ability to favorably compete in the market, as well as to address the potential effects of climate change.

Need:

Terrain and infrastructure to support a longer ski season - Mount Spokane has historically benefited from consistently cold winter temperatures and an average annual snowfall accumulation of about 150 inches. The existing ski lift and trail network is primarily situated on the southeastern exposure between a base elevation of approximately 4,300 feet and the summit of the mountain at approximately 5,900 feet elevation. As annual snow deposition has varied significantly over the last 10 years, the 4,100-foot level has emerged as the critical snowline. As a result, the location of the ski resort on the southeast aspects of Mount Spokane has restricted the operation of Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park, especially early in the season, due to the lack of snow in the lower terminal and base areas. Predicted climate change could exacerbate this effect due to the relative lack of north-facing terrain. Accordingly, there is a need for additional northerlyfacing terrain to provide better snow retention, increased operating days, and to address potential climate change. As a general rule, the higher elevation, the more northerly facing, and the more wind protected areas will have consistently better snow retention and quality. As a result of all of these factors, the snow quality in the PASEA area is generally some of the best found at Mount Spokane. The elevations are generally higher, the slopes are generally more northerly facing, and the area is generally more protected from wind than other portions of the ski area. As a result, there is generally more snow and higher quality snow in the PASEA area.

Purpose:

Decreasing skiing related injuries and resulting search and rescue operations within the PASEA.

Need:

MS 2000 has not been permitted to patrol, maintain or operate the PASEA in a manner that is consistent with the rest of its ski area operations. Because the PASEA is easily accessed from the summit and is known for its higher snow quality and excellent tree and glade skiing, it has become a popular destination for skiers seeking a lift-served back-country experience. Accordingly, MS 2000 has provided emergency response to lost and injured skiers within the PASEA on almost a weekly basis, which taxes the resources of its all-volunteer ski patrol. A formalized trail system and chairlift in the PASEA would lead to a significant decrease in back-country injuries and lost skiers by providing safer, groomable trails with more effective ski patrol operations.

An important perspective when considering this proposal is that MS 2000 understands the expectations of its patrons and as such continually strives to improve its recreational product to better serve their needs and demands, while at the same time practicing environmental stewardship in all aspects of its development and operational activities. Without development of new facilities that provide for an increase in visitation and financial realization per skier visit, more consistent with competing ski areas, Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Area will likely not be poised to generate sufficient revenues and operating cash to improve the skier experience or diversify the recreational offering at the ski area.

COMPONENTS CONSIDERED, BUT ELIMINATED

The following section discusses the reasons for additional project components or alternative proposals that were explored, but not developed in detail. A detailed discussion of these alternatives, and alternative components that were considered during the development of the Proposed Action but eliminated from further analysis, is presented below. Where feasible, potential effects of the construction of specific elements or groups of elements within the Proposed Action were reduced or eliminated by making revisions to the proposal. Finally, the project team considered whether the resulting project component or alternative would actually meet the Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action.

PASEA Two Chairlift Concept

This project component was developed in early 2006 as a concept intended to analyze the effect of maximizing ski trail development within the PASEA. Within the local market, Mt. Spokane competes with 49° North, Silver Mountain, and Schweitzer. Each of these areas has unique differentiators that attract a particular segment of the skier market. At the time the concept was developed, all of the areas in Mount Spokane's market had witnessed increases in visitation as a result of population and economic growth in the region as well as increased demand. Additionally, Lookout Pass, Idaho had recently received approval for additional lift and ski trail development within the "Northstar" pod.

Development of the two-lift concept, with approximately 15 additional ski trails would have provided lift served access to the majority of the terrain above Chair 4 road. As such, the concept would have the greatest potential to address the public need for new facilities and respond to the need for additional improvements at Mount Spokane in order to maintain competitiveness within their market.

Rationale for Elimination

It was determined during the preliminary environmental analysis that the beneficial aspects of this alternative could be addressed in a lower impact manner, as shown in Alternatives 2 and 3. Additionally, the terrain accessed by the second lift, located immediately southwest of the existing Chair 4, would have eliminated the "side-country" ski experience at Mount Spokane. As such, elimination of a second chairlift from consideration resulted in a reduced impact to backcountry users.

Connector Trail between Chair 6 and Chair 4

This project component was developed in order to provide more efficient circulation between Chair 6 and Chair 4. This revision to the Project Proposal would have included the development of a connector trail between the bottom of the proposed Trail 7 in the Chair 6 pod and bottom of the existing *Skid Road* trail to allow skiers in the PASEA to access ski trails in the Chair 4 pod from ski trails served by Chair 6. Additionally, the connector trail would have functioned as a catch trail to funnel skiers accessing terrain between the two pods to the bottom of Chair 4.

Rationale for Elimination

It was determined during the preliminary analysis phase that construction of the connector trail would result in approximately 6 acres of grading to formalize the connector trail. The trail alignment contains the highest density of large diameter trees within the PASEA analysis area. Based on discussions with MS 2000, their ski patrol could rope and sign the boundary to provide a similar catch trail function between the pods without grading the trail, as originally designed. Therefore, MS 2000 altered their Project Proposal to reflect the elimination of the formalized connector trail in order to protect wildlife habitat within the trail alignment.

2007 Trail Alignment

This alternative trail alignment was developed during the 2007 planning process. At that time, the confluence of Trails 3 and 6 was proposed further to the west in order to provide a smoother skiing transition and access to the bottom terminal of the proposed Chair 6 lift. This alternative would have resulted in an increased recreational experience for Mount Spokane guests round-trip skiing in the proposed Chair 6 pod.

Rationale for Elimination

During the early planning process, the confluence of streams and the concave landform in this area was identified as a "high" hazard area for mass wasting. Consequently, the trails were redesigned to avoid removal of trees in this area. After more detailed analysis (see Appendix A) no mass wasting hazard greater than "moderate" exists in the 279-acre Study Area. However, the design amendment remains unchanged and the concave landform remains protected.

Infill Option

This alternative to the PASEA expansion was developed to analyze whether additional trail development within the existing Chair 4 ski pod would meet existing market demand. This alternative would have included an increase in available terrain within the existing Chair 4 pod to meet the expressed "Purpose and Need" for the PASEA proposal, thereby eliminating the need to develop the seven new ski trails and chairlift as proposed.

Rationale for Elimination

The terrain distribution for the Chair 4 in-fill plan would result in a notable increase in expert terrain. Mount Spokane currently has a large quantity of good, consistent gradient, fall-line,

advanced and expert level terrain, available off the existing Chairs 1, 2, and 4. As a result, the resort has no particular need for additional advanced or expert level terrain. Advanced and expert skiers make up a small percentage of the overall skier market. Currently, Mount Spokane has a need for consistent gradient and consistent fall-line low intermediate and intermediate level ski terrain. This is the largest section of the market, so it will appeal to the greatest percentage of skiers. This is the type of terrain that is available in the proposed PASEA expansion. Additionally, the snow quality and retention in the PASEA area is generally better than in other portions of the ski area. As a result of all these factors, the PASEA area presents the best opportunity to create terrain that will significantly improve the ski experience at Mount Spokane and meet the needs of the greatest segment of the market. Therefore, for purposes of this analysis, the Infill option was eliminated from further consideration.

MITIGATION MEASURES

While an integral part of the EIS process, this proposal has incorporated a number of proposed mitigation measures intended to minimize potential resource impacts from construction of the proposed project. The Mitigation Measures detailed in Table 1 have been incorporated into the Proposed Action. For purposes of this analysis, the definition of mitigation under SEPA can be found in WAC 19-11-768 where:

"Mitigation" means:

- (1) Avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action;
- (2) Minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation, by using appropriate technology, or by taking affirmative steps to avoid or reduce impacts;
- (3) Rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment;
- (4) Reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action;
- (5) Compensating for the impact by replacing, enhancing, or providing substitute resources or environments; and/or
- (6) Monitoring the impact and taking appropriate corrective measures.

Mitigation Measures were devised in the pre-analysis and analysis phases to reduce potential environmental impacts associated with project elements. Mitigation Measures come from federal, state, and local laws, regulations and policies; scientific recommendations, or from experience in implementing similar ski area projects. The bulk of the Mitigation Measures provided in Table 1 are considered common practices that ski area managers have historically used in alpine and sub-alpine environments to prevent or decrease potential resource impacts. They are highly effective methods that can be planned in advance and adapted to site conditions as needed. They are intended to be a starting point and may be amended or added to as the Proposed Action undergoes further analysis under SEPA in an EIS.

Mitigation Measures were designed by MS 2000 and specialists involved in this proposal. The potential effects of implementing the Proposed Action assume these Mitigation Measures are applied.

In addition to the Mitigation Measures prescribed below for each resource area, MS 2000 would incorporate any conditions of approval from Spokane County and other jurisdictional agencies (e.g., Washington Department of Ecology, Washington State Parks) during the permitting phase following acceptance of the proposal from WSP.

Table 1: Construction Related Mitigation Measures Incorporated into the Project Proposal

VEGETATION

Understory vegetation would be preserved to the extent possible in all areas designated for flush cutting and/or overstory vegetation removal.

Prior to construction, the disturbance limits of the site would be flagged. Fencing, flagging, or a staked rope line would be established to denote the limits of construction proximate to sensitive resource boundaries.

Topsoil replacement, native plant seeding, and weed-free mulching (as necessary) would be used to stabilize disturbed soils in all areas where grading and soil disturbance would occur to promote native plant re-establishment.

Revegetation should use native plants. Seed mixtures and mulches should be noxious weed-free. To prevent soil erosion, non-persistent, non-native perennials or sterile perennials may be used while native perennials become established.

Local seeding guidelines would be used to determine detailed procedures and appropriate mixes. Preference is given to local seed sources, cultivars, and species available commercially. To avoid weed contamination, all seed purchased shall be certified weed-seed free.

Adequately mark tree clearing limits to avoid errors in clearing limits during construction.

Before ground-disturbing activities begin, identify and locate all equipment staging areas. Establish equipment wash stations at the base of the ski area for construction activities. Each station shall have a filter system, for example at least 6 inches of large cinder or gravel spread over an area 10 ft x 30 ft. Filter cloth may be used for temporary stations. The area would be a perched drainage to allow excess moisture to drain after being filtered. Equipment wash stations shall be located at least 200 yards from any natural drainage to avoid contamination. All soiled equipment shall be washed before entering and before leaving the expansion area. This includes construction personnel vehicles in addition to trucks and other heavy equipment. Equipment wash stations shall be monitored frequently and after completion of all construction activities. All weed materials shall be removed promptly.

Monitor all construction areas and roadways within the expansion area annually for at least five growing seasons and treat any noxious weeds found.

Effective ground cover (mulch) upon completion of ground disturbing activities would meet minimum level of the pre-treatment habitat type.

If any new populations of special status plant species are encountered during the construction process, work would be suspended in that area until State Parks is consulted.

Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park would be required to develop a vegetation management plan to control/eliminate non-native invasive plant species and provide direction for hazard tree management, coarse woody debris management, and general ongoing maintenance of vegetation in developed ski trails.

WILDLIFE

If the presence of any special status wildlife species is determined in the area affected by the Action Alternatives, a State Parks biologist, or equivalent specialist, would be immediately notified and management activities altered as appropriate. If any new populations of special status species are encountered during the construction process, work would be suspended in that area until the State Parks Biologist is consulted and potential adverse impacts mitigated.

All large trees and snags (over 20 inches dbh) located in any tree islands created by the project would be left standing unless they are identified by State Parks as a hazard tree. No formal ski trail clearing would occur within the proposed tree islands.

During construction, enforce measures to ensure that trash or refuse associated with construction is minimized.

All construction activities should be confined to daylight hours, excluding emergencies.

No food/drink should be kept/stored in construction worker vehicles. All windows should be kept closed and doors locked on all vehicles to prevent bear entry.

SOIL AND WATER

A grading and erosion control plan would be developed and submitted to Spokane County for review and approval prior to implementation of proposed project elements that include grading.

MS 2000 would develop a Spill Prevention and Response Plan, which would be included in the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPP) as part of the construction documents. Fuel, oil and other hazardous materials would be stored in structures placed on impermeable surfaces with impermeable berms designed to fully contain the hazardous material plus accumulated precipitation for a period at least equal to that required to mitigate a spill. Petroleum products would not be discharged into drainages or bodies of water. No fuels or construction machinery would be stored within stream or wetland buffers.

Project-specific Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans would include additional erosion protection (such as two rows of silt fence, straw bales and/or more permanent structures such as logs) to be provided between streams and construction areas close to stream channels. Water bars will be constructed within the newly disturbed areas to minimize downslope water movement through the site, and to direct sediment laden water away from stream channels. As specified in the project-specific SWPPP, water bars will be lined with erosion control fabric, sod, and/or mulch to prevent failures prior to the establishment of vegetation, as necessary.

Bridge crossings installed over intermittent/perennial channels would be completed in a single span to minimize inwater work. All footings would be constructed above the bankfull channel width. Additional short and long-term erosion control measures (e.g., erosion blanket, straw bales, rip-rap.) and water quality monitoring (e.g., pH, turbidity) would be specified in the SWPPP for the bridge crossing projects consistent with any required Hydraulic Project Approval permitting.

Soil-disturbing activities would not be initiated during periods of heavy rain, spring runoff or excessively wet soils.

Immediately following completion of approved ground disturbing activities and seeding, all areas of ground disturbance would be mulched with weed-free straw, wood chips, bark, jute mat, etc.

In all areas where grading or soil disturbance would occur, stockpile topsoil and re-spread topsoil following slope grading and prior to re-seeding. The stockpiled soil would be protected from wind and water erosion.

Areas determined to have been compacted by construction activities may require mechanical subsoiling or scarification to the compacted depth to reduce bulk density and restore porosity.

Vegetative buffers would be maintained adjacent to any intermittent or perennial drainages and wetlands, to the extent possible and would be flagged or otherwise marked to provide protection during clearing.

Check dams and sediment barriers (i.e., silt fence, weed-free hay bales, wattles, etc.) would be placed in all temporary erosion channels with minimum sufficient spacing to control runoff velocity and encourage sediment deposition. When check dams, sediment barriers, or sediment detention dams fill with sediment and exceed their design effectiveness, sediment would be excavated (by hand or mechanically) and removed from the site to a permanent upland storage area where erosion would not occur.

Logs and logging debris removal would minimize dragging or pushing through soil to minimize disturbances.

In areas where site conditions necessitate (i.e., excessively steep slopes and/or highly erosive soil types), temporary sediment detention basins would be created to detain runoff and trap sediment. Sediment basins would be created within the overall disturbance limits of the applicable project elements. Temporary sediment basins would be reclaimed following reestablishment of permanent vegetation and would likewise be revegetated.

On steeper slopes (>30% slope gradient), areas exposed by grading may require implementation of jute-netting or other appropriate measures to further stabilize disturbed soils. Installation should include:

- Seeding and mulching of the disturbed area.
- Burial of the top end of the netting in a trench of at least 4 inches depth and 8 inches width. The trench shall be backfilled and tamped.
- Netting should extend beyond the edge of the mulched and/or seeded area at least 1 foot on the sides and 3 feet on the top and bottom.
- The netting should be rolled downslope and secured with staples or pins.
- Netting should overlap at least 4 inches on the sides and secured with staples 5 feet apart along the overlap.
- The lower end of the uphill strip should overlap the downhill strip at least 1 foot and should be secured with staples 1 foot apart.

Fuel delivery and storage would be located, designed, constructed and maintained to reduce the potential and severity of spills.

GEOTECHNICAL

Forest clearing in areas susceptible to mass wasting would be avoided to the extent practical during trail layout and construction. The area of grading and soil compaction would be reduced by limiting access by construction equipment and drainage structures for stormwater and erosion control would not divert water into areas of mass wasting potential.

For projects proposed in areas susceptible to landslides or within slopes steeper than 60 percent, a qualified engineer or geologist would assist in the final design of ski area facilities to minimize the effects of unstable slopes.

WETLANDS

Apply BMPs for all ground disturbing activities to avoid sediment migration from ground disturbance into wetlands.

Wetlands proximate to potential disturbance zones of project elements would be re-identified and flagged prior to the initiation of construction related activities. Construction limits would be clearly defined prior to construction including buffers required by the permit conditions of Spokane County

AIR QUALITY

Grading areas would be watered, as necessary and practical, to prevent excessive amounts of dust. In the absence of natural precipitation, watering of these areas would occur as practical.

Burning of cleared timber, if required, would occur when air quality standards would not be compromised.

All equipment would be properly tuned and maintained. Idling time would be minimized to the extent practical.

RECREATION

Notices would be posted on summit trailheads and at the Vista House informing visitors about the possibility of encountering construction noise and activities within the PASEA. The notices would also identify where and when construction activities would be taking place

SCENERY RESOURCES

Avoid straight edges where removing trees. The edges of lift lines, trails and structures, where the vegetation is removed, need to use a variable density cutting (feathering) technique applied to create a more natural edge that blends into the existing vegetative cover. Edges should be non-linear, and changes in tree heights along the edges of openings should be gradual rather than abrupt. Soften hard edges by selective removal of trees of different ages and heights to produce irregular corridor edges where possible.

Stumps should be cut as low as possible to the ground to avoid safety hazard.

Regrade to restore a natural terrain appearance. Prior to grading, strip topsoil and save for revegetation. Where there is disturbed ground for new chairlifts including terminals, towers and foundation placements put any excess material back to the area with grading to avoid stockpile of material and maintain a natural appearance at transitions. Any site grading should blend disturbance into the existing topography to achieve a natural appearance and minimize cuts and fills at the transition with proposed grading and existing terrain.

Utilities must be buried, other than communication lines.

All disturbed areas shall be revegetated after the site has been satisfactorily prepared. Seeding should be repeated until satisfactory revegetation is accomplished. Reseed with a native seed mixture using a variety of native seed grasses, wildflowers and forbs.

Buildings, towers and terminals would be painted with a color blending with the area.

Chairlift terminals and towers would utilize muted colors to minimize the visual impact to the surrounding area. Bright colors are inappropriate for the forest setting. The colors should be muted, subdued colors because they blend well with the natural color scheme. The colors used for new facilities would include darker colors; greens, browns, navy blue, grays and black.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

If any artifact or human remains are found during project activities, affected tribes and State Parks would be immediately notified and the work in the immediate area would cease.^a

TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING

A contingency plan addressing closures to the main access road to the ski area due to weather and/or fallen trees will be developed in coordination with WSDOT, State Parks, and MS 2000.

^a Analysis will comply with Governor's Executive Order 05-05 on Cultural Resources, consultation agreements with interested tribes and the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), and the Programmatic Agreement between Washington State Parks and the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation Regarding Implementation of the Governor's Executive Order 05-05 in Washington State.

LIST OF PERMITS AND APPROVALS REQUIRED FOR IMPLEMENTATION

This section describes the list of permits and approvals required for the project action. For clarity, these approvals are dependent on the land classification decision to be analyzed under SEPA by Washington State Parks. As mentioned above, the non-project decision to classify the lands within the 279-acre area is necessary before any approval related to the construction of additional ski area facilities can be made. Should a land classification decision that allows for the expansion of alpine skiing (e.g., Recreation, Resource Recreation) be approved, the permits and approvals listed in Table 2 would be necessary for implementation of the project action.

Construction related to the project action will be scheduled to minimize seasonal impacts to biological and physical resources. Specifically, construction of facilities involving significant ground disturbance will take place during the dry season (generally summer and fall) to the greatest extent possible. Ski trail clearing and construction of other facilities (i.e., chairlift terminal and towers) will take place over the snow to the greatest extent possible. Once detailed construction documents are developed, all necessary consultations, permits and approvals will be acquired from the regulatory agencies identified in Table 2. A Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) will be prepared by MS 2000 to provide documentation for, and to obtain a National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permit for construction activities, as required. The SWPPP will include the development of project-specific Mitigation Measures. Project-specific Mitigation Measures and permit conditions from all construction permits will be incorporated into construction documents and permit applications when judged necessary by the regulatory agencies. The SWPPP will be approved by the Spokane County Building and Planning Department and construction activities will not commence until authorized by the agency.

Table 2: Summary of Permits, Approvals, and Consultation for the Proposed Expansion

Agency	Action/Regulation	Description of Permit/Action
STATE		
Washington State Parks	Classification Action	Lands within the 279- acre project area of the PASEA classified as either Recreation or Resource Recreation.
Washington Department of	National Pollution Discharge Elimination	Stormwater Permit for stormwater
Ecology	System Permit.	discharges at construction sites.
LOCAL		
Spokane County Building and Planning Department	Building Permit	Authorize construction of chairlift terminals
	Clearing and Grading Permit/Timber Harvesting/Critical Area Review	Authorize clearing, excavation and fill for ski trail construction

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